

Minutes of the East Greenwich School Committee
Tuesday, July 12, 2016
Archie R. Cole Middle School Library
100 Cedar Avenue
East Greenwich, RI 02818

Those in attendance were Ms. Carolyn Mark, Chair; Mrs. Mary Ellen Winters, Vice-Chair; Mr. Michael Fain; Dr. Yan Sun; and Mr. Peterson. Mr. Matt Plain was absent. Dr. Victor Mercurio, Superintendent; Mrs. Gail Wilcox, Director of Administration; and Mr. Bradley Wilson, Director of Student Services were also in attendance.

7:00 p.m. Regular Meeting

I. Call to Order

Ms. Mark called the meeting to order at 7:07 p.m. A moment of silence for long-time public servant, Carl Hoyer, was observed.

II. Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag

The meeting commenced with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag.

III. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

IV. Approval of Minutes

a. Regular for June 21, 2016

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Peterson, the Committee voted (4-0) to approve the regular minutes. Dr. Sun abstained and Mr. Plain was not present.

V. Superintendent's Report

The R.I. General Assembly has passed a mandatory 20-minute recess, which can be considered part of the instructional day, for students in grades K-6. This law takes effect in the fall of 2016. Obviously, we will implement. Our middle school houses our sixth graders, so Dr. Mercurio will be meeting with Mrs. Meyers to come up with a plan. Mr. Wilmarth, Director of Facilities and Grounds, has been meeting with Colliers International, formerly Strategic Building Solutions, on a proposal submission to the Department of Education for construction work in the summer of 2017. The Building Committee has sketched out a plan in bits and pieces and Colliers has been working with Mr. Wilmarth on it. A report and proposal will be created by a Building Committee core group working with Mr. Wilmarth and Colliers and submitted to the Building Committee. The Building Committee will get together and go over the report and proposal and submit to the School Committee for approval in August. Construction at Frenchtown is moving right along inside and outside of the building and within budget. The Providence Journal has begun to post the All State student selections. Scheduling students in August is difficult, so Dr. Mercurio will contact Mr. Cobain and have him reach out to selected student athletes for formal recognition in August. An update on the combined website project was held with Mr. Coyle and Mrs. Schmidle to review three vendors. We will utilize a vendor on the municipal side. South Kingstown uses this same vendor. We will put forward the proposal to the School Committee and Town Council in August or September. Ms. Mark asked about the school times. Dr. Mercurio will have a FAQ on times posted with the bus schedule published on August 1.

VI. School Committee Concerns

There were no concerns.

VII. Action Items

a. **Resignations- David Sullivan, Finance Committee**

Marie France Nothnagle, 0.4 FTE French Teacher, EGHS

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Peterson, the Committee voted (5-0) to accept the resignations.

b. Retirement- Patricia Winters, 1.0 FTE - Reading Specialist, Meadowbrook

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Dr. Sun, the Committee voted (5-0) to accept the retirement. Mrs. Winters will be recognized at the August School Committee Meeting.

c. Parental Leave-Ellen Garcia 1.0 FTE - Second Grade Teacher, Meadowbrook

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted (5-0) to accept the parental leave.

d. Appointments

1. English Teacher 1.0 FTE-EGHS - Jennifer Swanson

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Peterson, the Committee voted (5-0) to accept the appointment.

2. Speech & Language Pathologist 1.0 FTE - District-wide - Kate Forbes

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Dr. Sun, the Committee voted (5-0) to accept the appointment.

3. Severe & Profound Special Education Teacher - 1.0 FTE-EGHS-Melissa Rollings

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Peterson, the Committee voted (5-0) to accept the appointment.

4. Science/Chemistry Teacher 1.0 FTE - EGHS - Erin Woulfe

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted (5-0) to accept the appointment.

5. All Day Kindergarten Teacher 1.0 FTE - Frenchtown - Ann Fay

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Peterson, the Committee voted (5-0) to accept the appointment.

6. All Day Kindergarten Teacher 1.0 FTE - Frenchtown - Marybeth Straut

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Dr. Sun, the Committee voted (5-0) to accept the appointment.

7. Head Coach Football - EGHS - John George

8. Asst Coach Football - EGHS - George Dolan

9. Asst Coach Football - EGHS - Andy Butler

10. Asst Coach Football - EGHS - George Lee Anderson

11. Volunteer Coach Football - EGHS - Kyle Mushaweh

On a motion by Mrs. Winters, which was seconded by Mr. Fain, the Committee voted (5-0) to accept the appointments.

VIII. End of Year Presentations

1. Nina Mackta-Strategic Support Mentoring Program

Nina Mackta presented the Strategic Support Mentoring Program's end of year program review. The program began in 1999 and has grown, which can be attributed to teaching staff spreading the positive experience their students were having. There are approximately 62 mentors servicing 120 East Greenwich students who are in need of a positive role model. College students from our local colleges also serve as mentors and may take on 7-10 students at a time. The program also supports a homework club throughout the district. High school students are trained to assist elementary and middle school students with developing positive homework habits. High school students who participate in the program are fulfilling high school community service hours. The program will continue to assist the National Mentor Month and National Mental Health Month activities. Ms. Mark thanked Mrs. Mackta for the success of the program.

2. Bob Houghtaling-East Greenwich Drug Program

Bob Houghtaling, Director of the Town Drug Program, presented the Drug Program's end of the year report. He went over client statistics, referral sources, and referral for services numbers, as well as prevention initiatives. He noted that prescription Opioid use is up and has impacted us. Not all of his referrals come from the police, many come directly from a family member. He sees clients, college students, ages 18-21 reaching out for help. He has many prevention initiatives in place: A Teen Center on Friday nights, which is currently being held at Eldredge;

Youth to Youth Summer conference; and many, many more. We also have a wonderful working relationship with the schools and police. All funding is town sponsored.

IX. Advisory/Subcommittee Update

a. Policy Committee

Dr. Sun reported that because of the complexity of the rental policy, she will have more information for the Committee at the August meeting.

b. Personnel Committee

Ms. Mark reported that over the course of the last couple of months, the Committee was in the process of facilitating the superintendent's evaluation. Also, consistent with our newly expanded charge, we're starting to play a more supporting role to district administration with regard to looking at human resource policies. We are also looking at the systems we are using and whether or not the systems we have in place is consistent to where we want to be in our strategic plan. Over a certain time frame, we will figure out what work needs to be done in an efficient manner. Ms. Mark stated that she will have more to share by the second meeting in September.

c. Special Education Advisory Committee (SEAC)

Presentation by Nicole Bucka regarding the results of a Special Educators' survey. Sixty-four percent of the teachers participated and were very supportive, candid, and grateful for the opportunity. The survey suggested that curriculum (math) (reading) methods are a concern. More training for teachers and paraprofessionals is evident. Overall, the survey showed that special education students were not growing. Vision for 2020- implement curriculum development. Dr. Mercurio thanked Mrs. Bucka and stated that her presentation was outstanding. He agreed with the presentation of the curriculum orchestration lacking ownership.

X. First Read Policies

a. Transgender Non-Discrimination

Dr. Mercurio presented a first read draft and Attorney Matthew Oliverio was present to address any legal questions. This draft is a synthesis of what has been shared by state, federal, and local laws and a sample drafted by the Cumberland Public Schools, which took on components reflective of the R.I. Department of Education. The sub-committee fashioned a draft, and it was shared with Administration Council for any questions and/or concerns regarding any part of the policy. East Greenwich will strive to maintain confidentiality and privacy as any gender and medical treatments is considered to be confidential medical information and protected under RI General Laws. Student comfort level is a priority, and we must provide opportunities for free expression. We will assure students that they are supported. It is essential that we address and support all students' level of comfort, that is for transgender and non-transgender alike. An alternative restroom and locker room must be provided for students who are not comfortable with using gender-segregated restrooms or locker rooms. Respect for all individuals is to be maintained. Transgender students who transition after having completed high school have the right to request an amendment to their student records, such as name and gender. A second read will be presented in August and the policy in place for the fall. Dr. Sun asked whether we will accept feedback from the community. Attorney Oliverio responded that it must coincide with RIDE guidelines. Training will be needed for faculty and administrators. Training will also be offered to parent volunteers and substitutes. However, Attorney Oliverio stressed that confidentiality is a concern with all groups. Maintaining respect and providing necessary means of support is crucial. Mr. Fain had a concern about students' level of comfort with sharing facilities with transgender students. He feels that communication is vital and that training should support all students. He also asked the cost associated with potential, necessary changes. Dr. Mercurio said that he would check with Director of Facilities, Mr. Wilmarth. Dr. Mercurio mentioned that the Sargent Center may possibly be used for training.

XI. Discussion

a. Teaching and Learning: International Society for Technology in Education (ISTE) 2016

Six staff members went to this year's conference. Dr. Mercurio will have a large host of information that he will share with teaching staff across the district.

b. FY 2017 budget

Dr. Mercurio said that he will have a better picture of the 2017 budget in August.

c. All Day Kindergarten

Dr. Mercurio addressed the enrollment numbers for Kindergarten in both Frenchtown and Meadowbrook Farms. The enrollment for Frenchtown is 79 and Meadowbrook is 79. We will have four Kindergarten teachers in both schools. The budget was for two additional Kindergarten teachers in Frenchtown and one additional Kindergarten teacher in Meadowbrook. Mr. Fain asked Dr. Mercurio what the maximum number is for Kindergarten. The maximum number is 22, and as you can see, we are not far from reaching the maximum. The additional Meadowbrook Kindergarten teacher will be pulled from the candidates already interviewed. Dr. Mercurio also addressed the fact that numbers are creeping up for sophomores and juniors.

d. Draft Regulations for Policy #2725 Advertising and Acknowledgment of Donations

Dr. Mercurio presented and Attorney Matthew Oliverio was present to address any legal questions. Dr. Mercurio referred to his handout as a working draft and stated that he used a variety of different sources and researched different communities and states. Schools in RI have advertising policies but not regulations policies. East Greenwich will have advertising display requirements. Outdoor signs shall not exceed three square feet and no three-dimensional signs will be approved. School colors will be respected. Uniformity is key and our goal. All advertisements are the property of the EG School Department and may be removed at any time. The reasons for removal may include: disrepair; policy guidelines changes; non-payment of fee; and dissolution of company. Dr. Mercurio has drafted an application for advertising because it is important that there is a paper trail. A fee will need to be agreed upon and there will be an annual renewal. East Greenwich will have the right not to renew. Dr. Mercurio will consult with legal counsel and present another draft to the Committee in August and will present the final copy in September. Mr. Peterson noted that some advertisers may not want to adhere to certain colors and may prefer their trademark colors. Attorney Oliverio stated that addressing the following is important: fee issues; superintendent's discretion to make a determination of what is appropriate and what is not; uniformity; and religious advertising. He also stated that the policy may need to be amended from time to time.

XII. Adjournment

On a motion by Mr. Peterson, which was seconded by Mrs. Winters, the Committee voted (5-0) to adjourn at 9:07 p.m.

Margaret M. Ucci
Secretary